

# Protecting Communities and the Environment: Fuels Management Conference

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## Fuels Management Planning

Issue Statement (re-state and clarify issue):

1. We need a consistent, interagency cost benefit analysis which will identify and prioritize fuel treatment projects on a landscape scale, and which will be based on an analysis of values at risk from wildfire and the probability of wildfire. We will also need to identify the fuel management program specific requirements that will be used as input into a cost effective analysis used for formulating out year budget requests.

Recommendation(s) (what should be done; who would do it; what is the timeline):

A Subject Matter Expert group, representing the Interagency Fuel Management Program as designated by the National Fuel Management Program Lead for each of the five federal agencies, will provide to the FPA Development Team a consistent cost benefit tool to ensure the business requirements for the fuels program are included in Phase II Request for Proposal. Need to have this SME group formed by March 1, 2004 and in contact with Howard Roose, FPA core team. The SME group should include advisors/ reviewers from appropriate resource disciplines.

Rationale (discuss reasons for recommendations):

The date of March 1, 2004 was selected due to need of Fuel Management requirements used for developing the Request for Proposal (RFP) of Phase II, Fire Program Analysis System (FPA). The development of the RFP can take three or more months prior to soliciting responses to the RFP. Funding is currently available this fiscal year.

Related Issues:

Coordination with the outcomes from the Work Group, Indicators of Success – Identifying Short and Long Term Measures and possibly the Work Group for Effectiveness Monitoring should be reviewed to ensure all requirements will be addressed in the RFP.

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2. We need to identify the fuel management program objectives and other specific elements required for the development of a fuel management analysis, which are specific to FPA Phase II. Both FPA and FMPs will likely need these inputs. Need to determine the common links between FMPs and FPA fuel management inputs.

Recommendation(s) (what should be done; who would do it; what is the timeline):

A Subject Matter Expert group, representing the Interagency Fuel Management Program as designated by the National Fuel Management Program Lead for each of the five federal agencies, will provide to the FPA Development Team a consistent cost benefit tool to ensure the business requirements for the fuels program are included in Phase II Request for Proposal. Need to have this SME group formed by March 1, 2004 and in contact with Howard Roose, FPA core team. We recommend similar resolution as issue #1; the same SME group and timeframes.

Rationale (discuss reasons for recommendations):

- There is a deadline of 2004 to have a current FMP for each unit with burnable acres. An important component for fire management plans and FPA are desired conditions, objectives, conceptual modeling, and constraints.
- We have been directed through congress and the administration to do more collaborative FMPs which will require not only the existing interagency FMP template. We also need to mitigate the unique planning processes for each bureau and have the flexibility to adapt in the combined effort.
- The SME group will help define relationships and integration between the FMP and analysis tools, such as FPA fuels module. This group will provide an appropriate cross-section of interagency, resource specialist, and field expertise.

Related Issues:

There is confusion on how to utilize Fire Regime Condition Class in the broad planning context, strategic fire planning, and site specific project analysis.

Landfire is currently being developed. How will this tool integrate with other tools and how will it be used in the broad planning context?

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3. There is a difference within and among the agencies with regard to the interpretation of and compliance with NEPA and other environmental laws in the fire management planning process. This difference arises from differences in interpretation regarding the decision points in the planning process which trigger compliance.

Recommendation(s) (what should be done; who would do it; what is the timeline):

Each agency shall define their compliance processes for fire and fuels management planning and implementation. The National Fuel leads shall designate a subject matter expert group, made up of a balance of fire management and planning expertise, to determine when and where NEPA and compliance with other environmental laws (including the National Historic Preservation Act and the Endangered Species Act) is required and consistency is needed to facilitate the interagency planning process. The SME group should include advisors/ reviewers from appropriate resource disciplines. Need to have this SME group formed by March 30, 2004 and in contact with Sarah Robertson/Kate Winthrop, SME group leads.

Rationale (discuss reasons for recommendations):

Various agencies recognize different fire management decision points in the planning processes, triggering compliance with NEPA and other environmental laws at different scales of analysis. There is also a lack of consensus internally in some agencies as to what requires NEPA and compliance in fire management plan development. Agencies need to clarify what constitutes FMP decisions, where these take place, and the appropriate level and scale of analysis needed under NEPA, NHPA, ESA, and other applicable authorities, in order to facilitate planning on a landscape scale and across agencies boundaries.

Related Issues:

WFSA's, program decision points or trigger points in risk thresholds as related to fire fighter safety, FRCC development, inputs for the Fire Management Plans, inputs for Fire Program Analysis System.

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### **4. Issue Statement (re-state and clarify issue):**

In spite of a standardized national policy, there are barriers to implementing interagency fire management planning in a compatible timeframe, due to differences in agency missions, policies, protocols and culture.

### **Recommendation(s) (what should be done; who would do it; what is the timeline):**

Should be determined by the National Fuel Leads and may be the same SME group as in issue 3.

### **Rationale (discuss reasons for recommendations):**

We want to be able to plan efficiently, effectively and in a timely manner with partners and collaborators.

### **Related Issues**

Who will the SME group consist of (interagency)?

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Issue Statement (re-state and clarify issue):

5. All agencies have not been given the same authorities (i.e., Stewardship contracting and HFRA) which limits joint project implementation and can be confusing.

Recommendation(s) (what should be done; who would do it; what is the timeline):

WFLC needs to work on resolving this issue.

Rationale (discuss reasons for recommendations):

The above mentioned authorities give additional tools for “some” Agencies to implement fuels reduction projects. It would benefit the other Agencies to be given the same authorities particularly where joint planning and projects are being done. Not everyone (including the public) realize that some of the authorities were Agency specific.

Related Issues:

None identified at this time.